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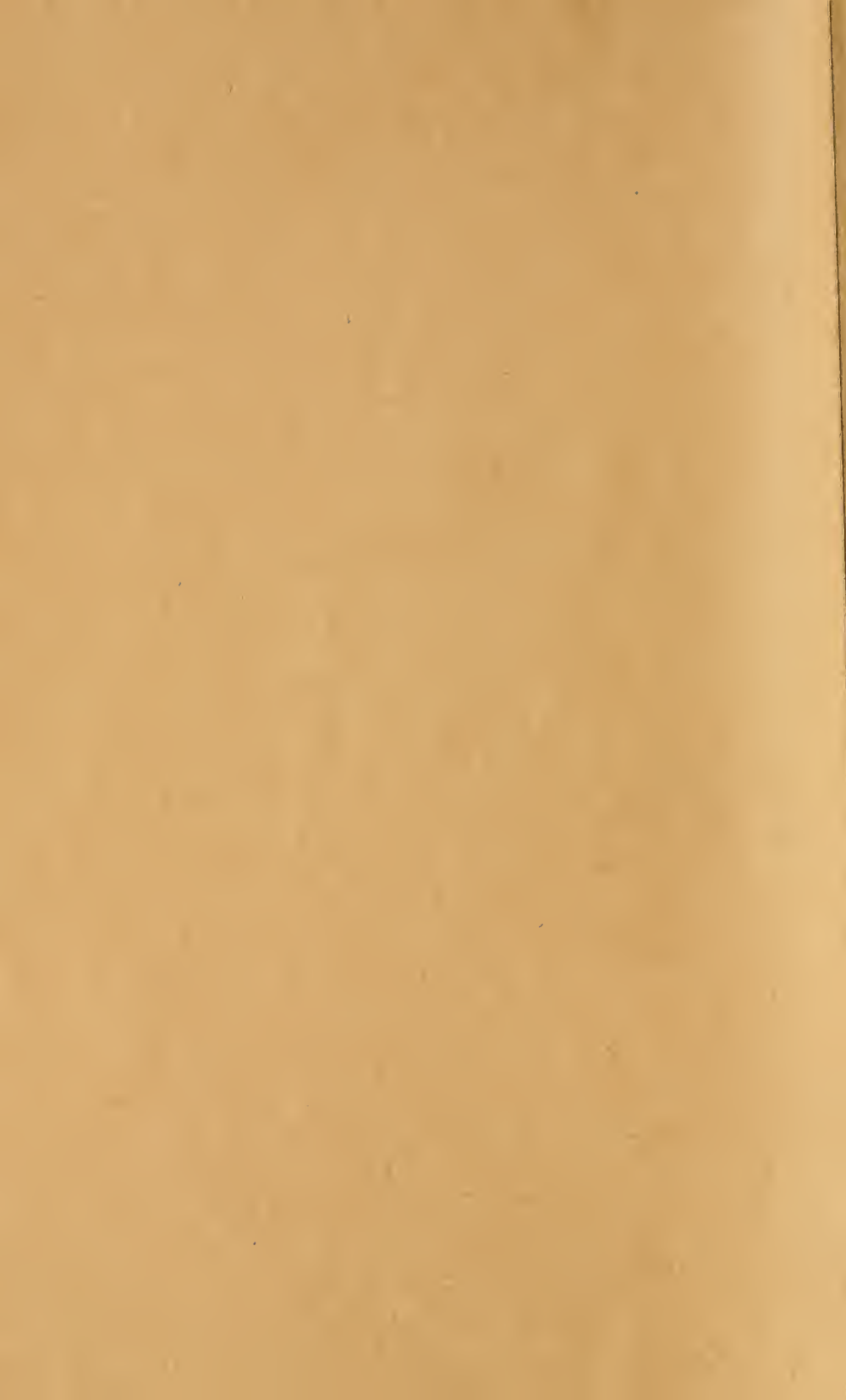
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C A L Ā F.

A REJECTED DRAMA.

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894703
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MAIN

TO THE READER.

A LADY, unknown in the Literary World, offers to the Public a rejected Drama, called CALĀF, translated, with additions and variations, from the Italian of IL Gozzo, who dramatized it from a Chinese story called TURANDOTÉ. Critics who have sufficient curiosity to peruse the Italian may censure the Translator for deviating so far from the Original; whereas, if instead of naming the source from whence the materials were drawn, she had introduced the Work as her own, there would have been just grounds for a charge of plagiarism. The dramatic beauty of the piece first induced the lady to translate and offer it to Mr. ———, who condemns it to obscurity. The rejected Drama is *printed*, not at the solici-

tations of friends, or from any partial encouragement, *tout au contraire*; but for reasons which will be developed if it is successful. If a trifle of this kind is read by those who seek amusement, and found capable of engaging the attention agreeably during an hour or two of relaxation from important studies, or of leisure from active pursuits, it answers the purpose for which it was published, and may flutter through its hour of sunshine with any other butterfly.

CHRYSLIA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

—o—

ALTOUN KAN, *Emperor of China.*

CALAF, *Prince of the Nogaian Tartars.*

TIMUR, (*in the disguise of a Beggar,*) *King of Astracan.*

BARAC, (*married in Pekin under the name of Hassan,*) *Tutor to Calaf.*

ISMAEL, *Tutor to the slain Prince of Samarcand.*

USBEC, *Secretary of State to the Emperor.*

NEVIAN, *High Chancellor of China.*

CUBLON, *Commander of the Palace Guards.*

TRUFALDIN, *Chief of the Eunuchs.*

TURANDOTÉ, *Princess of China.*

ADELMA, (*a Tartar Princess,*) *Favourite Slave of Turandoté.*

ZELIMA, *a Chinese Slave of Turandoté.*

FATIMA, (*lately married to Barac,*) *Mother of Zelima.*

Mandarins, Eunuchs, Executioners, Soldiers, &c.

—o—

SCENE—*The City of Pekin.*

Dresses all Chinese, except those of CALAF and ADELMA, who are habited as Tartars:—TIMUR, in the last Scene, in a Tartar habit.

*Truth Shown
from
Mrs. C. Hervey Smythe*

CALAF.

ACT I.

Scene—Before the Gates of Peking; the house of BARAC is next the Gate, outside; the top of the Gates surmounted by a row of spears, with heads stuck upon them, some shaved à la Chinoise, others as Tartars, and in the modes of different Countries.

CALAF, (*coming from the House of Barac.*)

IN Peking I may find some courteous being, who—
(*Barac coming from the City perceives him.*)

BARAC.

Ha! is it possible? Prince Calaf living!

CALAF.

Barac! thou here?

BARAC.

My young lord! Can it be?

CALAF.

Betray me not : but say how cam'st thou hither ?

BARAC.

After thy sire, my sovereign, had beheld the downfall of his army in the field of Astracan, our Nogaian Tartars fled in all directions from the ferocious Sultan of Carazam, the bold usurper, who laid waste the kingdom with conquering fury : I retreated, wounded and sorrowing, to Astracan ; there heard that Timur, our king, and thou, my prince, were slain in battle : hastily, on this, I sought the palace, to save, if possible, the Queen Elmaze. Vain was my search : the furious conqueror had led his troops to storm that royal fortress ; and all the helpless inmates had become captives or fugitives. I wandered forth despairing, and many tedious months had passed away in pain and weariness ere my arrival in this imperial city. It were no boot to say what perils I have known, or how escaped. Men call me HASSAN here, born, as *they* think, in Persia : under that name, I found a kind asylum with a fair widow, who has known misfortune ; my converse cheered her, and I sold some jewels in aid of her distress : she pleased me, and was grateful. We were married. Yet still I keep my secret ; *she* calls me Hassan, believing me a Persian. Here, on my slender means, I live contented ; poor, indeed, compared with my estate under your royal sire ; but now rejoicing, since thou, my Prince Calaf, my son almost, as educated by me, art safe. O ! say from whence arrived, and how in Pekin ?

CALAF.

Barac, I charge thee name me not : my life is hunted.—After the conflict on that fatal day, my father and myself rushed to the palace, to seek the queen, and bear away our jewels ; with these my parents—myself their sole attendant—fled to the desert, disguised in mean attire : by night we journeyed on ; our days were spent concealed among steep rocks. Great were our sufferings, Barac. We travelled towards Tobolsk, and near Mount Caucasus were robbed by Calmuc Tartars, who spared us but our lives and rustic habits : the extremes of thirst and hunger completed our distress. My aged father, and my helpless mother, were borne alternately upon my shoulders. We reached at length the city of Cashgar, where, with a burning cheek, I stood imploring even in the street for alms to feed my parents. Meantime, the cruel Sultan of Carazim, not finding our remains among the slain, proclaimed a rich reward to who should bring us, alive or dead, before him. The King of Cashgar, in consequence of letters he received, ordered an instant search. Once more, my friend, we wandered fugitives. Alas ! how hard the trial—to sustain our heavy woes with fortitude !

BARAC.

Oh ! stop thy sad recital, or my heart will break to hear of Timur, my sovereign, and his consort, thus reduced to want, with thee, my son ! A royal family, the best, the bravest, begging their bread ! Say, do they still survive ?

CALAF.

Both still survive. Hear me relate what 'tis the lot of

man, though born in grandeur, to suffer in this world. A great mind must bear its trials firmly ; must remember that, in the sight of the eternal God, a monarch is but mortal, ennobled only by his obedience to the will of Heaven, and constancy in virtue. Onward we passed, though worn with care and suffering, and reached the realm of King Cheicobad, now tributary to this great Khan of Pekin : there, to sustain my parents, I employed myself in menial offices about the Court, where the fair Princess Adelma beheld my state with kind compassion ; methought e'en more : I read in the soft hazel of her eye " thou wert not born to serve." Thus on my toil we lived till the rash king engaged in war with Altoun, whose conquering army dealt swift destruction on him and all his race : the Princess Adelma was taken captive, but drowned in the attempt to bear her off. Again we fled from slaughter ; and at Berlas sought an asylum, where, by dint of labour, I still maintained my parents.

BARAC.

Forbear, my lord : since I behold thee now in princely vestments, say how thy fortune changed ?

CALAF.

List then : a hawk much valued by the great Khan of Berlas regained its freedom ; high rewards were offered to any who could take and bring it to the horde ; this was my lot. When questioned by Alinguer, I told how losses had reduced my parents from affluence to want, but not our royal birth : he, on the instant, gave orders to remove the drooping pair into his hospital, and well supply them with what their comfort needed. In that retreat, oh

Barac ! are placed thy sovereigns : they live in fear their rank should be revealed, and life the forfeit.

BARAC.

Ye gods ! what bitterness !

CALAF.

On me the Khan Alinguer bestowed a purse of gold, a war-horse, and apparel ; with these I rove abroad in search of fortune, either to lose my life, or to return and liberate my parents. Such is our sole resource, our desperate hope : here in Pekin, but now arrived, I, under a feigned name, shall serve the emperor, and win my way to honours and to wealth. The city, on this day, seems thronged with strangers, who now make lodgings scarce ; but in this house resides a matron whose pity gave admittance. My horse is sheltered near.

BARAC.

My lord, it is my wife, who—

CALAF.

Thy wife ? indeed thou art most fortunate to call thine own a dame so courteous. Excuse me a short time : I wish to see on what occasion people from all parts assemble in the streets.

(Going to the gate.)

BARAC.

Stop, Calaf, hear me ; seek not to behold the atrocious spectacle ! Know Pekin is a scene of direst cruelty !

CALAF.

How so? relate the cause.

BARAC.

Hast thou not heard the name of Turandocté, the daughter of the emperor: more dazzling in her beauty than the sun in all its brightness? She is the cause of mourning and cruelty in China.

CALAF.

Some fables I have heard; it was reported that king Cheicobad had once a son, who perished in strange manner when at Peking, which caused the war and ruin of their kingdom: yet more was rumoured, but the ignorant, who wish in vain to penetrate state secrets, often raise false reports, and such as all men of sense must ridicule:—what more?

BARAC.

It was no false report: the matchless charms of Turandocté are not more famous than her subtle wit; she has read the laws of great Berginghuzin, and with her dark enigmas can perplex the learned mandarins. Her picture, though no painter can pourtray her all-attractive loveliness, has been admired at many courts. She is averse to marriage, and is so haughty—

CALAF.

This is the very fable I heard with ridicule.

BARAC.

It is no fable : her royal sire, most anxious to bestow her hand on some brave prince, who may divide with him the cares of empire, still presses her to choose ; whilst she, with scorn, rejects all offers. Unhappy Altoun, finding his fond persuasions disregarded, and his dominions oft involved in war, at length insisted his daughter should make choice of some young prince, or should invent some method to appease offended candidates, and save the peace of China's capital. Now listen to the dire and sad request of this flint-hearted beauty.

CALAF.

Now hear the tale at which I smiled incredulous ; list if I know it well : this princess, of her sire, obtained an edict, enacting that each prince who asked her for his consort, should first submit to these conditions :—

“Turandocté, princess of China, in the presence of the assembled divan, shall propose to the candidate *three enigmas* ; —if all are rightly answered, her royal hand shall be the glorious prize ; but, if in *one* he fail, the emperor shall swear to punish his presumption by the loss even of his *head*.” This is the fable, Barac, is it not ? You may relate the rest, it wearies me.

BARAC.

Fable ! Oh, would to heaven it were no more ! The royal Altoun at first denied her suit, but the disdainful beauty, by her prayers, her tears, and feigning sickness, wrought on her doating sire, till he was moved to sign the harsh decree.

CALAF.

What you assert I must give credit to; yet surely, since, no prince has been so foolish as to stand a public trial, on such terms as these?

BARAC.

Look there! (*points to the heads on the gate;*) those dismal relics were no long time past the heads of royal lovers like thyself, who all essayed to solve the dark enigmas, and, failing, lost their lives!

CALAF.

So many fools!

BARAC.

The brightest intellect is no defence when Love assails. That great magician has a spell to bind the most unwilling spirits to his bidding; he *breathes* his mandate, and the bravest warrior trembles and bends before him. The crowds which now beset the public square, and, still increasing, pour along the streets, assemble to behold an execution of the harsh sentence on the Prince of Samarcand, the handsomest, the best informed, of all who have expired in this fatal cause. Altoun, with tears, laments the oath which binds him to stain his court with such ferocity; while the inhuman princess, in her pride, enjoys her triumph. Harken! (*the muffled drum is heard:*) that sullen sound announces “the heavy stroke is past.”

CALAF.

Strange things thou hast related ! is it possible that Nature should produce a female heart devoid of all compassion, even as thou hast described this Turandocté ?

BARAC.

It is as I have stated : a daughter of my wife lives in the harem, handmaid to the princess ; and of her royal mistress she repeats things which excite our wonder ; the tygress, impelled by hunger, is not then more fierce than is this Turandocté, when aught rouses her pride or her ambition.

CALAF.

The devil take such monsters !—Were I her father, she should be burned alive !

BARAC.

(looking towards the city.)

Here comes, borne down with sorrow, Ismael, the tutor of the last ill-fated prince.

(Enter ISMAEL, speaking.)

Oh, my lost prince ! why could not these grey hairs receive the death-stroke for thee ?

BARAC.

How couldst thou suffer him to risk his life in such a cause ?

ISMAEL.

Add not reproaches, Hassan, to what I feel ; alas ! my warning voice was raised in vain : there was not time to let his father know the threatened danger, else I had done that. Reason availed nothing, and to command my prince were strange to me, whose duty bade me serve him.

BARAC.

May thy philosophy restore thy peace !

ISMAEL.

Peace ! peace is murdered ! to my latest hour his words and accents, engraven on my mind, will dwell and nourish eternal grief. “ Weep not,” he said, “ I death prefer to life, without that matchless beauty ; excuse me to my sire, for having quitted the court without his knowledge ; say that my disobedience arose from fear that in his wisdom he would deny my suit ; shew him this picture, (ISMAEL takes a miniature from his pocket,) —when he beholds the charms of my superb destroyer, my father will forgive me.” Unhappy Mirvan ! having thus spoken, he kissed the fatal image, and bowed his head before the falling axe. Think of my agony, when blood-stained hands held up his guiltless head !—another trophy to that infernal —. Never will I return to Samarcand ; but in some lonely desert wear away the remnant of my days.

ISMAEL *rushes out, leaving the picture on the ground.*

BARAC.

You hear, my lord.

CALAF.

I do,—and what I hear excites my wonder. Can it be possible a picture has such power?

(Stoops to pick it up.)

BARAC—*(prevents him.)*

Hold, Prince! what would thy rashness?

CALAF.

I would behold this formidable portrait.

BARAC.

Better for thee it were to lose thy sight, or fix it on the stern Medusa's head; I'll not permit——

(Seizes the picture.)

CALAF.

If thou art mad, I am not; female beauty can never rob *me* of my bosom's peace, although it charms mine eyes. I speak of living beauty; from a *picture* there can be nought to fear. Such trifles, Barac, can never draw my thoughts from my misfortunes.

(Catches at the picture.)

BARAC.

For pity shut thine eyes.

(Endeavouring to keep it, but in vain.)

CALAF.

Stand off;—thou wilt offend.

(Looks at the picture, and stands amazed.)

BARAC.

Alas ! unhappy prince.

CALAF.

Barac, 'tis all amazement ! In this sweet image, these eyes benevolent, this gentle mien, can such a heart inhabit as you describe ? No, never !

BARAC.

Ah, me ! my prince ! the charms of Turandocté are so surpassing that no art can paint them ; neither can tongue describe the hardness of her heart, her pride, or her ambition. I tell thee but the truth. Throw then, I charge thee, from thy sight and thoughts that fatal picture.

CALAF.

Thy threats are wasted, vain is all resistance ; these blooming cheeks, these eyes, and smiling lips, subdue my very soul. Oh more than mortal blest that man must be who sees and hears the bright original, with hopes to call her his. Barac, betray me not, this is the time to venture all ;—the prize, how glorious ! to obtain the fairest bride on earth, with her an empire,—or at one stroke to lose a miserable life, long since a burden. *(Looking at the picture.)* Thou gentle image, have pity on thy victim !—I go to

seek thee, or to die for thee. Tell me, Barac, if in the full divan, before my death, I may but once behold those living charms which lead me to destruction.

(The muffled drum is heard,—the executioner, attended by some guards, brings in the head of the Prince of Samarcand, and places it over the gate. Exit.)

BARAC.

Look there, and tremble ! behold the head of an unhappy prince, and think how soon the executioner, who placed it there, may range thine own beside it,—a spectacle of horror to frighten other rash ones ! Oh, hope not to expound the dire enigma of subtle Turandocté.

CALAF.

(To the head over the gate.)

Ill-fated youth, what evil star rules our sad destinies ! I go, Barac, to meet the trial : let no one hear my name. Heaven may at length relent, and raise my fortune to save my sorrowing parents. If I succeed, thy faith shall be rewarded.

(Going, Barac holds him.)

BARAC.

Stop, stop, 'tis madness.—Come forth, my Fatima ; this valued friend is going to expose his precious life for cruel Turandocté !

(Enter FATIMA.)

FATIMA.

What do I hear?—My guest! What moves thee thus to rush on certain death?

CALAF.

Fate leads me on, most hospitable dame, and this fair smiling image!

FATIMA.

Ah! who has given him that infernal picture?

BARAC.

A fatal chance.

CALAF.

Good Hassan, with thee I leave my steed;—and, courteous lady, accept this purse of gold, and in thy prayers remember the unfortunate. (*Rushes into the city.*)

FATIMA.

Who is this generous stranger thus rushing on his ruin?

BARAC.

He is a youth of such bright parts, of so much wit and learning, that of his fate I am not quite despairing. That gold, my Fatima, must be distributed to purchase supplications for his life. (*Goes into the city.*)

FATIMA, (*alone.*)

Not that gold only, but my utmost hoards shall all be spent in alms, to save the life of that young handsome stranger ; of noble manners, and such sweet countenance : he seems well known to my kind husband, and his dress denotes high rank. Threescore fine fowls, and store of river fish, shall be my offering to great Hi-chien-fo ;—the Genii shall have rice and vegetables, the Bouzes also must share our gifts :—so wills Confucius.

END OF ACT I

ACT II.

Scene.—The great Hall of the Divan. Two large doors, facing each other, lead to the Palace, or Emperor's Residence, and the Harem of the Princess.

(Enter TRUFALDIN, with attendant eunuchs, and CUBLON, with a suite of pages.)

TRUFALDIN.

Sweep the hall, ye black dogs; put the thrones in order, for our high and mighty Emperor, and the beautiful and learned Princess, the sun and moon of China; who have more wit than the stars, and reign over all the sovereigns in the world. Bring eight seats to the eastern side for the wise mandarins, our doctors and judges, who search out things unknown, expounding and perplexing all the laws.

CUBLON.

Why, Trufaldin, what causes all this preparation?

TRUFALDIN.

Cause enough, old Cub. :—Our puissant emperor, our haughty princess. and all the learned counsellors of the

divan, are coming here directly to dispatch the trial of another candidate ; who, by the grace and leave of great Fo-hi, will in an hour have his head cut off.

CUBLON.

Another ! 'tis not three hours since the executioner stuck the last head upon the city gate : how light you talk of those inhuman slaughters !

TRUFALDIN.

Who fetches here these foreign princes ? It is not of *our* seeking that the fools flock thus to Pekin : they come unasked, and hear the penalty before they see the axe. I serve the beautiful princess, and when by her enigmas she has posed a suitor and sent him to his fate, she makes rejoicings, treats all her slaves with curry and sherbet, and then we dance and sing.

SONG.

[AIR.—*When the men a-courting came.*]

When the fools a-courting came,
Kneeling to her royal highness,
Of their fooleries she made game,
In her pride she mocked their shyness.

Bowing to her,
Wooing to her,
Vexing of her,
Love they proffer.

Her sire they gain their suit to aid in,
Yet none can win the royal maiden.

Late the Prince of Samarcand,
 Handsome, tall, and well-descended,
 Made his entry all so grand,
 By a chosen troop attended.

Roving Tartars,
 From their quarters
 By mount Caucasus,
 Came to visit us.

Staring, swearing, steeds devouring,
 Or through the streets of Pekin scouring.

Our undaunted royal maid,
 Call'd her wits to save her freedom,
 Swore a dunce she'd never wed,
 And wrote her thoughts, for—who could read them?

To guess my riddle
 Is thy fate, sir,
 Or lose thy head
 To deck my gate, sir.

He found the spell too hard to sever,
 So farewell love and life together.

*(They cease.—The air continues in the apartment,
 though no musicians are visible; a small
 shrill voice continues the song as follows.)*

From the wilds of Astracan,
 Came a youth both fair and witty,
 Of the race of Zingis Khan,
 Won the prize, and rul'd the city.

From the gates
 He threw the têtes,
 No more her pride,
 Her suit denied.

Mortals, know 'tis mine to tame ye,
 Mine ye are, or were, or shall be.

(All look up, and behold a Cupid grotesquely habited, sitting across a car shaped like the great bell of Pekin; as they gaze, it vanishes.)

CUBLON AND TRUFALDIN, *staring up.*

TRUFALDIN.

Stop him, catch him; if we can but put him in the parrot's cage, what a shew he will make for the ladies to play with in the harem.

CUBLON.

You are as cruel as Turandocté; she ought to choose a consort, and put an end to this destruction.

TRUFALDIN.

Those who have no mind to marry, have a right to live single.

CUBLON.

If your mother had not married, you would not have been here.

TRUFALDIN.

You lie, Cublon ; my mother was not married.

CUBLON.

'Tis plain you are an upstart.

TRUFALDIN.

I am chief of the black eunuchs, and you shall not come to interrupt my orders ; go and domineer over the pages.

(During this contest, the attendants have put the hall in order ; a march is heard, announcing the approach of the emperor. All go out.)

(The folding doors on the right are thrown open. Enter the palace-guards, the mandarins attended by scribes, the emperor surrounded by his officers and courtiers ; on his entrance, all prostrate themselves till their foreheads reach the ground, except the mandarins, who bend very low, and stand with folded arms, and heads declined, till Altoun is seated on his throne, when all rise and arrange themselves in their places. The music, which has been playing all the time, now ceases.)

ALTOUN speaks.

How long, my faithful subjects, shall we suffer these scenes of horror ? Scarcely can funeral rites be solemnized

for one unhappy prince, while yet my tears lament him ; when another ill-fated stranger comes to claim the trial, and wake new anguish in my tortured mind.—Relentless daughter ! born for my affliction ! have I not sworn by dire Confucius ?—I dare not break my oath. Alas ! I never thought such *numbers* would brave the hard alternative. Who now will counsel any thing to save these youthful victims ?

USBEC.

Great majesty of China, there's no telling how to give counsel in a case so strange, and so unknown : who ever heard before of princes mad with looking on a picture ? crowding like sheep to give their witless heads, the prey of a fierce lady like our princess ;—and when was damsel born who hated lovers, as Turandocté hates them ? Before my poverty had sent me forth from mine own distant home to seek my fortune, I knew no more of this great realm of learning, except that it produced a potent charm to cure a tertian ague : these laws and oaths astonish,—and had a story so improbable been told me long ago, I would have plucked the beard from the relater, to shame his fabling tongue.

ALTOUN.

Hast thou, O Nevian, visited the young ill-fated stranger ?

NEVIAN.

Great emperor, I have ; he has the chamber assigned to princes who demand the trial : his noble presence, and his mild behaviour, charm all beholders ; in my life, I

never saw personage more comely ; my heart aches to think how he will march up to the block, and perish like a calf.
Weeps.)

ALTOUN.

Oh, grief unspeakable ! let a great sacrifice be instantly made ready to implore that all our country's gods will aid the stranger to penetrate the meaning of the questions put by my cruel daughter.

USBEC.

Most mighty Emperor, thy wise commands have been obeyed before thy words were uttered : a hundred horses this very morn were offered to the Sun, thy royal brother ; an hundred sheep to the pale Moon, first cousin to thy greatness ; and to the Stars a herd or two of porkets, lest they should blame, or hold themselves forgotten :—yet nought but sorrow follows this profusion.

ALTOUN.

Conduct the prince before us, we will assay to save him from the trial ; and you, ye faithful sages of the divan, assist us now, should grief impede our voice.

(Calaf is conducted into the hall, escorted by a guard of honour ; he kneels before the throne, and places his hand on his forehead.)

ALTOUN.

How graceful and engaging ! (*aside.*)
 Arise, rash boy.—Say, thou unfortunate, what sovereign
 is thy sire ?

(*Calaf rises, and takes a seat in the midst of
 the hall.*)

CALAF.

May I entreat your gracious majesty, let my sad name
 remain concealed at present ?

ALTOUN.

How darest thou, without proof of royal birth, aspire to
 wed my daughter ?

CALAF.

I am a prince, dread sovereign ; and should the heavens
 decree that here I meet my doom, my birth shall be revealed,
 to make it known, that, though the lovely prize is far be-
 yond my utmost merits, I had not thus presumed unless
 my birth were royal : allow me then to the last moment of
 my wretched life to keep the secret.

ALTOUN, (*in a low tone.*)

What noble manners !—yet, should he resolve the dire
 enigmas, while his birth remains unknown, perhaps un-
 equal ;—will the law oblige ?

CALAF, (*interrupting.*)

Thy pardon, emperor; that law was made for princes *only*: and oh, should heaven grant me to expound the questions of the princess, I will freely deliver up my head beneath the axe, and give my limbs to feed the ravenous kites, if it be proved my birth is less than royal. There are in Pekin those who can witness for me, that this my speech is true.

ALTOUN.

We grant thee thy request; such power has gentle language to persuade: well were it for thyself could we but thus dispose thee to oblige an emperor who asks thee from his throne—give up this vain attempt; alas! desist, nor rashly here expose thy youthful life. Remain in this our realm, and share our power: 'tis much against my nature to be harsh; these scenes distress me, and make me deprecate the name of parent.

CALAF.

I thank thee for these generous sentiments, as for thy royal offers, mighty Altoun; but still that fatal beauty leads me on; my heart is fixed, for death or Turandocté.

USBEC.

Consider, your highness, before you suffer yourself to be slaughtered like a sheep, the devil and all the doctors could never guess the three riddles; the city gates are already stuck full of heads, and I entreat your highness not to place your's in such foolish company.

CALAF.

Old man, I will have death or Turandocté.

ALTOUN.

Rash boy, be satisfied ; thou shalt have death, and we shall have remorse !—Guards there ! conduct the princess hither to receive another victim.

(Trufaldin and some pages go out, having prostrated themselves.)

CALAF, (*apart.*)

Eternal gods, inspire me with wisdom ; let me not be confounded in her presence ; I feel my weakness, and implore assistance to save me in this peril.—(*Aloud.*) Sacred divan, thrice learned mandarins, excuse my boldness, and let the blindness of a youthful passion obtain your pity, whilst you blame the rashness which hurries me to an untimely fate.

(March playing, enter some palace-guards, who fall prostrate ; a number of female slaves veiled, who kneel with hands crossed over their bosoms : Adelma in a rich Tartarian habit, Zelima in a rich Chinese dress, carrying a vase of porcelain containing the SEALED ANSWERS. Turandocté, in the imperial costume of China, with a veil of silver tissue reaching almost to her feet ; her train supported by two white and two black slaves, about ten years of age, in the

habits of four different countries tributary to China. Trufaldin and the pages follow the princess, and fall prostrate as they enter ; the mandarins and officers bow to the ground as Turandocté advances ; she pauses before the emperor, and bows with her hand to her forehead. Altoun rises, and extends his hand to seat her on a throne by his side ; her two favourite slaves stand at her feet, on the steps of the throne. Calaf, who knelt on her entrance, now rises, and stands gazing, as if enchanted. Trufaldin takes the vase, and with many ceremonies and genuflexions, presents it to the mandarins. Music ceases.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*haughtily.*)

Where is this bold pretender, come to try his wit on my enigmas ; he who will take no warning by example, and sues to lose his life ?

ALTOUN.

Daughter, see where he stands ! and merits well that thou shouldst choose him for thy consort now, and finish these sad trials, which afflict thy sire, and all his empire.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*aside to ZELIMA.*)

Zelima, methinks this prince awakes in us a new compassion, more than others who have suffered ! 'tis strange.

ZELIMA, (*aside to TURANDOCTÉ.*)

Let him, my princess, have three easy questions, and terminate at once these scenes of sorrow.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Darest thou thus counsel me against my glory ?

ADELMA, (*aside.*)

Alas ! and is it Oscar I behold ! he *is a prince then* ; well, my heart assured me his birth was noble.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*aloud.*)

Let me advise thee, prince, ere yet too late, desist from this mad enterprise ; the powers above can witness that my nature is not hard-hearted, but such is my aversion to thy sex, that against marriage, and to guard my freedom, I use the arms which nature has bestowed in my defence. What brought thee here to seek us ?—not our wish : if prayers avail, we here entreat of thee, give up the purposed trial ; if unrelenting, 'tis in this alone,—the gods have favoured me with rarest talents, and I would rather die upon the instant, than thus, before the full divan, a mortal should surpass me in subtlety or learning. Desist at once, or meet thy destiny !

CALAF.

A voice so eloquent, such dazzling charms, joined to such rare endowments of the mind, in one fair excellence !

How can he err who risks his life to win her? Can Turandocté know her own worth, and doubt my ardent wish to stake a thousand lives?

ZELIMA, (*aside.*)

My princess, he excels all other suitors, give him some easy questions, let him win.

ADELMA, (*aside.*)

Why knew I not his rank ere I became thus low in fortune.—(*Aloud.*) Think on thy glory, princess!

ALTOUN.

Let the decree be read in this assembly.

Usbec takes from his bosom the manuscript, puts it on his head, and crosses over to Nevian, to whom he kneels; and Nevian, kneeling also, takes it from his head, and reads aloud.

“It is decreed in China, that whatever prince shall seek to obtain the hand of the princess Turandocté, must first explain three enigmas, to be proposed by her highness in the presence of the assembled divan: should the answers agree with the written interpretation, the prince may claim the royal Turandocté as his bride; but, if he fail, he must submit to have his head cut off by the fell axe.”

—Altoun Khan, emperor of China, has sworn by dread Confucius, to enforce this decree.

Nevian places the book on his head, and kneels to Usbec, who receives it kneeling, puts it on his head, and thus presents it to the emperor, who lays one hand thereon, saying—

—O fatal decree ! I have sworn by the great Confucius to enforce thee.

TURANDOCTÉ (*rises, and exclaims aloud.*)

Tell me, O stranger, what is that which has a place in every city, palace, and country ; which is always secure among the victors, or with the vanquished in battle ; whose appearance is known to all, which is a friend to all, and suffers no equal ; what thou hast present, and cannot name ?

CALAF.

If with no darker questions, gracious Princess, thou'rt pleased to try thy servant, I may prove most fortunate, ere long :—that which belongs alike to every city, each palace, and each land ; which, among the conquered, and those that conquer, holds on its way secure, beams blessings on mankind, and owns no equal, which even now shines on me,—is the Sun !

A mandarin unfolds the first paper, and exclaims

A wise reply, it is the glorious Sun !

ALTOUN.

Heaven send thee, prince, the same success in all, as with the first.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*aside.*)

Shall I be thus outdone ! surpassed in wit !

(*Aloud.*) What is that ancient tree, which yet is always renewed and flourishing, whose numerous leaves are white on one side, dark on the reverse? say what the name it bears?

CALAF(*bows, pauses, and then speaks.*)

Bright excellence! disdain not, that thus I solve the question. That tree most ancient and always new, which has its leaves white on the one side, on the other dark, with its alternate hues of day and night, *pourtrays the Year!*

A mandarin opens the second paper, they all exclaim

Well answered, prince, it is; it is the Year!

ALTOUN.

May Fo and Chien-ti favour us, until our woes are ended; but one remains.

ADELMA, (*aside to TURANDOCTÉ.*)

Your highness loses all your former triumphs; shall he surpass thee?

TURANDOCTÉ, (*aside to ADELMA.*)

Be silent! rather would we the sun should fall, and all mankind should perish.—(*Aloud.*) Audacious wretch! thou art detested more for this presumption; haste, quit the divan while escape is left; fly from the last enigma, or thou diest.

CALAF.

Thy hatred, beauteous Princess, most afflicts me ; as for my life, I prize it not, unless to win thy smiles.

ALTOUN.

Desist, my son ; and thou, our dearest daughter, cease to perplex him ; he is most deserving, select him for thy consort.

TURANDOCTÉ.

My consort ! is it thus my sire should counsel, to break the law ?

CALAF.

Pardon, my sovereign, that I still maintain my first resolve, or death or Turandocté.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Be death thy portion, then !—Tell me, of all the animal creation, what has at once power over sea and land ; is mild to friends and terrible to enemies ; has the wings, teeth, and claws, of every animal, yet is never weary of shewing mercy ?—Behold me, and tremble, (*the princess throws off her veil,*) explain, or *prepare to die !*

(*Calaf stands amazed ; then, with his hand before his eyes, endeavours to collect his senses*)

ALTOUN.

Courage, my son, be not dismayed or dazzled.—(*Aside :*) Alas ! he fails.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Wretch, thou art self-condemned ; go to thy fate !

CALAF.

Not yet, bright princess ; though thy wondrous beauty surprised me thus, and reft away my senses, I am not vanquished yet. The greatest of the animal creation, to whom belongs the strength and arms of all, with power at once to govern sea and land ; in might triumphant, and for mercy famed, is Altoun Khan, the Emperor of China.

(Mandarins open the last paper, all exclaim—
Most true ! it is our mighty Emperor !

(The whole assembly shout, the music plays ;
Turandocté faints in the arms of her slaves,
who all crowd round her.

ALTOUN, *(rising, embraces Calaf.)*

Joy to thee, prince ; daughter, receive thy consort ?

TURANDOCTÉ, *(starting up.)*

Hold ! I have more enigmas to propose, and will not thus submit to own a victor ; too short a time was given me to reflect. Hope not, rash prince, to wed with Turandocté ; return to-morrow, and I will try thy wit with other questions.

ALTOUN.

No, tyrant ! the stern law is now abolished, and these inhuman cruelties shall cease.

ALL THE MANDARINS.

The princess is won—the decree is abolished.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*kneeling.*)

My father, save me; if my life is yet of value in thine eyes, delay once more, but till *to-morrow*. I shall die with grief, ere I become the bride of this presumptuous, detested stranger.

ALTOUN.

This obstinacy will not change our purpose. Ho! guards there!

CALAF.

Rise, fair and haughty tyrant of my heart; and let, O Emperor, my earnest prayer suspend thy high commands. Disdained by Turandocté, still must I mourn my own unhappy lot: nor would I be the cause of punishment to her, whose charms subdue me; while aversion reigns in that bosom, never will I claim the cold reluctant hand; but even consent, since 'tis the wish of her who rules my soul, again to stake a life not worth preserving.

ALTOUN.

Not so! we will not suffer another trial; haste to the temple.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Lead to the temple, and behold thy daughter expire upon the altar.

CALAF.

Expire, alas! O Altoun, O my princess, let me implore

one favour of you both. Assemble the divan again to-morrow, and let the fair disdainful beauty then answer a question, which I now propose; or, failing, may that precious hand be mine, and that proud heart be softened to indulgence.—“Whose son is that prince, and what the name he bears, who has beheld himself reduced to beg his bread; to carry burdens at the city gates, for the support of life; who, hovering at the height of human bliss, has seen himself as suddenly cast down in deep misfortune’s gulph?”—If fairest Turandocté explains this sad enigma, myself will place my head in readiness for the descending axe.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Stranger, we are content with these conditions, and here accept the terms.

ALTOUN.

But we are not content, nor will permit other conditions than the law ordains.

CALAF, (*kneeling.*)

Dread emperor, hear me; if my adverse fate awake thy pity, let my prayers prevail: grant to the beauteous princess time to try the question now proposed.

ALTOUN.

Ill-fated youth, thou wilt repent this folly; the wit of Turandocté is most piercing; she knows the proverbs of each sacred book, and all the sentences of our great Prophet.

Thus far, indeed, we grant the trial claimed ;—if the princess should name both sire and son, she shall regain the freedom of her choice ; but never shall these tragic scenes return, when princes suffered death for her caprices !—Safe shalt thou leave our court, if unsuccessful.

(March plays during the time that all leave the hall, with many Chinese ceremonies.)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Harem; enter Adelma, and a Tartar Slave, her confidant.

ADELMA.

Thy counsels are displeasing, I forbid thee to name the subject more; the dictates of my heart alone shall guide my actions—all powerful love for that ill-fated prince, hatred to my disdainful rival; with shame and grief at this vile slavery—consume my life. Five suns have run their course, whilst still I live to suffer; still am doomed to feign submission to that proud princess, who is the cause of all my woes: the blood that fills these veins thou knowest is *royal*, as that of Turandocté; nor can I longer subdue the rage I feel, while forced to serve her. At length, behold me fixed in my resolves to use my utmost arts—this day shall free me from slavery, or from life.

SLAVE.

Delay at least, my princess, till oppor—

ADELMA, (*impatiently.*)

No more! molest me not,—obey! (*Slave bows low, crosses her arms, and exit.*) Here comes mine enemy; I will observe her.

(*Enter Turandocté and Zelima.*)

TURANDOTÉ.

And yet, my Zelima, I scarce am mistress of mine own thoughts ; the dread of marriage, the shame of being surpassed in full divan, has quite confused my senses.

ZELIMA.

How ! sovereign lady ; a prince so handsome, so amiable, so much enamoured, too ! can such an object excite aversion ?

TURANDOTÉ.

Torment me not ; with anguish, I confess, this prince has waked sensations before unknown ; I tremble at his name : 'tis not for fear or pity, he is hateful beyond all other men ; he of my late confusion was the cause, and now my ignorance is published through the country ; the ridicule of fools ! Assist us, Zelima ; this hard enigma must be guessed before the hour of noon to-morrow, or at that hour we must perforce obey the emperor's decree, and follow this rash stranger to the altar !—"Whose son is that prince, and what the name he bears, reduced to beg his bread ; to carry burdens at the city gates for the support of life ; who, hovering at the height of human bliss, has seen himself as suddenly cast down in deep misfortune's gulph."—We well perceive it is himself he means, by that sad prince ; but *who* he is, or what his father's name, how shall we learn ? where turn for aid ? alas !

ZELIMA.

In Pekin there are some well versed in magic, and know

how to bring to light dark hidden secrets ; to one of these, my princess, have recourse.

TURANDOCTÉ.

We are not credulous like thee, Zelima ; the vulgar herd are tricked by such impostors, and ignorance is caught by practised cheats : hast thou nought else to counsel ?

ZELIMA.

Could earnest prayers avail, I would implore thee to pity the young prince, would then remind thee of his fair speech, deep sighs, and graceful action ; how movingly he pleaded with thy sire, to bend him to thy wishes.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Speak not of him. This heart is too relen——. Ah, no, he's hated more than all mankind, though all are our aversion ; the love they offer is a lure to blind us ; we trust, and lose our freedom ; then, in the place of assiduity, indifference comes, when vows and oaths are broken. No, Zelima, we will not hear of him. How can we think of marriage, or subjection, who never yet obeyed a mortal being ?

ZELIMA.

My princess, 'tis the pride of youth and beauty wakes these disdainful thoughts ; the time will come when these enamoured princes pause ere they risk their heads to gain thy hand ; thou wilt repent, in vain.

ADELMA, (*coming forward.*)

So think the lowly born; and thus *they* counsel. Excuse me, Zelima; ill canst *thou* judge of what a *princess* suffers, who, in her course of glory is eclipsed by one unknown, a stranger! but those who sympathise with lofty thoughts, can feel what maiden royalty endures, when the low jest, or the malignant smile, go round among the crowd who throng the divan to witness her defeat.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Vex us no longer.

ZELIMA.

How can it be a misfortune, to become the consort of a prince so highly gifted?

ADELMA.

Cease, cease! thy base ideas cannot *reach* the indignation of a royal mind, compelled to answer questions difficult, before the multitude; then, should her highness fail, (and small the chance of solving the enigma,) how can her pride endure the laughter of the crowd?

TURANDOCTÉ, (*furiously.*)

Hold, Adelma! if, ere the time proposed, we cannot learn the names of sire and son, behold me fixed, even in the temple, on the altar steps, to plunge a dagger in my heart.

ADELMA.

Rather endeavour, with some artful tale, to draw the secret forth.

ZELIMA.

If warmer zeal or greater skill you boast than I possess, do thou assist the princess.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Assist me, if thou canst, O Adelma ! his father's name, and that of the young stranger, how shall we seek ? we know not whence he came.

ADELMA.

He, in the Divan, stated that in Pekin were those to whom the secret of his birth is known, and who could witness that what he said was true. Search then the city through; spend gold and gems,—all may be gained, by purchase.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Gold and gems dispose of at thy pleasure : let me obtain the names, my treasures shall be lavished on the search.

ZELIMA.

And where should they be spent ? of whom enquire ? it is beneath the virtue of a princess to gain the object of her search by treachery !

ADELMA.

It does not seem that Zelima, a slave, will play the traitress to serve her princess.

ZELIMA.

Evil thy counsel, Adelma ; hear me, my sovereign lady ; be persuaded : bestow thine hand on this deserving prince. My mother, Fatima, has just been here, all joyful that the enigmas are dissolved, and, knowing nothing of to-morrow's trial, she says, the stranger lodges in her house, and that her husband knows and much respects him. I asked his name, but that is not revealed ; and Hassan still avoids betraying it, though much entreated : yet she promises to do her utmost to discover for us how he is named, and who his father is. Can my princess still doubt my zeal ?

(Exit.)

TURANDOCTÉ.

Excellent Zelima, why dost thou leave us ?

ADELMA.

Thus, Turandocté, has thy slave discovered a useful track, but she is far too simple to obtain the information sought for ; since it were folly even to suppose that Hassan would reveal the names entrusted to him, unless, by some surprise, he should betray them. I have a project, if thou wilt consent to follow my advice.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Well, let us go. So that the stranger loses, thou shalt not want the means to try thy power.

(Exit.

ADELMA *sings.*

Young enthusiast, sigh no more,
Now thy waking dream is o'er;
Gone for ever from thine eye,
Young enthusiast, cease to sigh.

Starting at the sound, she said,
Tell me not of visions fled:
Bid the death-struck spirit fly;
Then, oh then, I'll cease to sigh.

(Speaks.) Now love assist thy votery; oh, favour my escape from slavery, and make a haughty rival herself prepare the way!
(Exit.

SCENE II.

The House of BARAC: CALAF and BARAC in earnest conversation.

CALAF.

If my name, and that of the king my sire, are only known to thee, my faithful Barac, when our country is so

distant from China,—eight years having elapsed since we lost our kingdom,—when the report of our death seems verified by the obscurity in which we have so long existed; is it likely that any person here should recollect me, or discover my secret?

BARAC.

It was most imprudent: excuse me, prince; the children of misfortune should guard against all dangers, the most improbable may still be feared; the walls, the stones, all turn against the fallen. I cannot rest: thou hast o'erthrown thy fortune even when it promised most; but now in open contest thou hadst won a brilliant consort, fam'd for wit and charms; a mighty empire hail'd thee as its heir: with risk of life all this was purchased, and by the strength of thy capacity. Alas! all this, even by the weakness of thy heart, is lost!

CALAF.

My life was hazarded for Turandoté, whose smiles, were they obtained, might well repay a thousand lives. Her dread displeasure makes existence painful. Ah, saw ye not the fierce disdainful glances she cast to overwhelm me in the divan!

BARAC.

Think on the parents thou hast left at Berlas; and let compassion for their helpless state prevail with thee to take what fortune offers, rather than fear the anger of the princess.

CALAF.

Reprove me not ; her anger to appease, is my first thought,—that last submission was not displeasing, it may have raised some spark of gratitude.

BARAC.

In Turandocté never !

CALAF.

Better to die for her, than live without her ! Say, Barac, hast thou never broke thy caution, or nam'd me to thy wife ?

BARAC.

I have not named thee : cautious as thy wishes thy faithful servant guards the important secret ; yet sad presentiments alarm my mind, and make me tremble.

Enter NEVIAN, USBEC, CUBLON, and Palace Guards.

USBEC.

Guard them : take them !—Who can he be talking with ?

NEVIAN, (*to CALAF.*)

May it please your highness, who is this man ?

BARAC, (*aside.*)

What will become of us ?

CALAF.

He is to me a stranger : I found him here ; and have been questioning about this city, of its rites and customs.

NEVIAN.

Pardon my curiosity, young prince : I noted well thy courteous bearing and thy ready wit before the divan ; may I then ask why thou so stupidly hast acted, since the victory was thine own ?

CALAF.

Confine thyself to thine instructions.

CUBLON.

When they have done chattering, 'tis I must act.

NEVIAN.

Have a care, Master Cublon, on peril of thine head.

CUBLON.

I know the value of my head better than thou canst tell me.

NEVIAN.

If the name of your highness were intrusted to me, I would keep it a profound secret ?

CALAF.

To-morrow thou shalt hear it.

CUBLON.

Will your highness allow me to obey the orders of the emperor to conduct you to a commodious apartment, where no curious person will be permitted to intrude?

CALAF.

We will attend. (*To BARAC :*) good day, friend.

CUBLON, (*to the Guards.*)

Wait on the prince to his apartment with all due respect, and on your lives keep off inquisitive persons.

(*Exeunt omnes.*)

(*BARAC stands looking after CALAF : TIMUR, in the dress of a ragged old Beggar, enters, and sees his Son among the Guards.*)

TIMUR.

Heavens ! is that my son whom I behold borne off, surrounded by a troop of soldiers ? Has then the cruel tyrant of Carazam pursued him even to Pekin ? alas, thy sire will die with thee, Calaf, Calaf !

BARAC, (*draws his sword, and seizes TIMUR by the arm.*)

Old man be silent, or thou shalt be slain this very moment : whence art thou ? say ; and how thou dar'st to shout after that youth ?

TIMUR, (*viewing him.*)

Ye gods ! it is Barac ! Thou here in China !—a rebel, then,
with sword uplifted against thy sovereign !

BARAC.

Thou Timur !

TIMUR.

Yes, traitor, strike and end my days at once ; life is become too wearisome to bear : we see our son betrayed into the hands of that vile sultan, and can live no longer.

BARAC (*kneels.*)

My sovereign, pardon me ; I knew thee not ; nor ever swerved in my fidelity to thee, or to my prince. O, name him not ; keep secret thine own name ; and call me Hassan here, no longer Barac ; (*looks fearfully round.*) The queen, thy consort, is she too in Pekin ?

TIMUR.

Alas ! my suffering consort ! she bowed her head beneath affliction's stroke, and with her last breath blessed her absent son.

BARAC.

Unhappy princess !

TIMUR.

Resolved to find my son, or meet with death, chance has

conducted me to this fam'd city, where the first sight a parent's eyes behold, is that dear son now borne away by force.

BARAC.

No force was used with him, my honored liege. O let me lead thee hence : to-morrow all the danger will be past that threatens our young prince ; he will perhaps be great and fortunate, and thou wilt share in his felicity, provided, ere that time, his name, with thine, are both unknown, and I am called Hassan.

TIMUR.

What secret is concealed ?

BARAC.

I dare not utter it so near these walls : come on, my sovereign.—What do I see?—ah, fool, what hast thou done ?

(Sees Fatima coming from the seraglio.)

FATIMA.

Rejoice, oh Hassan ! the handsome stranger has been victorious : our gentle guest has won the mighty prize. Curious to know how the disdainful princess would learn submission to the will of fate, I sought the harem, and have seen my daughter, who joined with me to celebrate his praise.

BARAC, *(angry.)*

Incautious woman, thou know'st not half the mischief

thy prating may occasion. I sought thee, to forbid thy going out; but female folly always runs before the march of manly wisdom. Methinks I hear thee, in thy childish joy, exclaim aloud, “this stranger, Zelima, has been our guest: my husband knows his name, and pays him homage.”

(Mocking her voice.)

FATIMA.

What harm would come, if I had said such things?

BARAC.

Confess it, now, if thou hast spoken thus.

FATIMA.

I’ve said as much to Zelima, who then enquired his name, which I have pro—

BARAC, *(hastily.)*

Fool, we are lost for ever! let us fly hence.

TIMUR.

What is this mystery?

BARAC, *(agitated.)*

Let us quit Pekin; let us leave these walls.—*(Guards are heard at a distance.)* Ah! tis too late: the cruel Turandocté has sent to seize us; fly, Fatima, and hide this miserable—

TIMUR.

But why ? say why ?

BARAC.

Close up thy lips, nor utter thine own name for all the world can offer : and thou, my wife, if aught can remedy the wrong ye cause, conceal this stranger ; take him away, and come not near our dwelling ; but shut him up from sound of human voice, till twenty hours are past.

TIMUR.

Canst thou go with us ?

BARAC.

Make no reply ; I cannot : they seek me ; I must answer. Depart this instant.

FATIMA.

Tell me how I have erred ?

TIMUR.

Where must we go ?

BARAC.

Be still, ungrateful wife. Unfortunate old man !

(Guards heard without.)

Ha! tis no longer possible to fly! What are my sovereign's orders, within the reach of Hassan to obey? behold me ready.
They all run to the door, are met by TRUFALDIN and the black Slaves, who guard the harem of TURANDOCTÉ.

TRUFALDIN.

To answer me a question : who is this old man?

BARAC.

A poor wretch, of whom I know nothing. Let us go on.

TRUFALDIN.

Not yet : who is this woman?

BARAC.

The princess sends for Hassan : there is no time to lose among such people : the woman I never saw before.

TRUFALDIN.

Why, thou lying rascal! I have seen this woman before. She is the mother of Zelima, who attends the princess : moreover, she is thy wife.—Seize on these three : bear them away to the seraglio.

(To the eunuchs.

TIMUR.

Say what is to become of me?

BARAC.

Old man, whatever becomes of me will also be thy lot : in silence I shall suffer ; let my example teach thee : remember my advice.— Now, foolish woman, art thou satisfied ?

(To Fatima.

TRUFALDIN, *mimicking, makes signs to lead them off.*

(Exeunt omnes.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Seraglio, with Columns on each side ; in the centre, a Table, on which stands a Vase filled with Gold Coins. Black Palace-Guards bring in the Prisoners ; they tie Barac and Timur to separate Columns, Fatima stands weeping before Turandocté, who is seated at the upper end of the Hall, attended by Slaves.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Once more we offer safety, — only once ; reveal the names of the young stranger and his sire, then all that gold shall pay the price of thy obedience : if ye refuse, our slaves shall quickly search with bastinadoes for the hidden secret, nor stay their hands till life is driven forth. Ho ! slaves, observe !

(Six black slaves fall prostrate, and, as they rise, take up each a large stick, and stand ready to strike.)

BARAC, *(to FATIMA, aside.)*

Now, see the mischief thou hast done by babbling.

(*Aloud.*) Behold me, princess, resolute to die, rather than utter word that may betray the names of sire and son, —though well I know them. Let then thy slaves begin my punishment. Wife, never weep for me ;—employ thy tears, if they can wake compassion, rather in behalf of that unfortunate old man, whose only crime is that he sought our charity.

FATIMA.

Alas ! for pity !

TIMUR.

Care not for me ;—so long inured to woes ; if aught of my declaring can avail, I'll say—

BARAC, (*hastily.*)

Hold ! hold ! if once the name of that young prince is uttered here in this presence, he is lost, undone for ever ; thou wilt pronounce his death !

TURANDOCTÉ.

Old man, say, dost thou know it ?

TIMUR.

Do I ? thou cruel princess !—(*To Barac :*) Say why, my friend, must we conceal these names ? What is this fatal secret ?

BARAC.

The secret of *his life* ; death is his portion, if known by name before to-morrow noon.

TURANDOTÉ.

Old man, he would appal thee ; heed him not ;—slaves strike the audacious rebel.

(Slaves close round him.)

TIMUR.

Can I behold him suffer in our cause, without assistance ? Princess swear, even by thy sacred head, to spare his life, and save that of the prince unknown ; to let me meet the punishment decreed, if such they have incurred :—on these conditions I will reveal the names.

TURANDOTÉ.

By great Confucius, and by our head, the life of that young stranger shall be safe ; so shall thine own.

BARAC.

Ha ! traitress ! Beware, old man, of treachery !—swear, Turandoté, that when the names of sire and son are uttered, thou wilt receive the stranger as thy consort,—so justice bids. Swear also that our lives, when we have told the secret of the prince, shall not be spent in vile imprisonment, to hide thy subtle arts from public view. Such be the oath, ere we declare the names.

TIMUR, *(surprised.)*

Secrets of dread import ! I fear to speak. Ye gods, remove me from these miseries !

TURANDOCTÉ.

This obstinate resistance tires our patience. Slaves, take them both to feel the bastinado.

FATIMA.

Pity, I implore your highness.

BARAC.

Be wary, old man ; guard thy words from rashness.

TIMUR.

To my dear son, I willingly devote the remnant of my days ; a broken heart destroyed his sorrowing mother, and soon would be my fate.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*agitated.*)

His son ! Stop, slaves. Art thou a king, indeed ; father to that unknown ?

TIMUR.

A king, indeed ! and father driven to despair !

TURANDOCTÉ, (*aside.*)

In such calamity,—a sovereign—sire to the prince whom I would hate, but cannot ; alas !—(*Aloud :*) Old man, say more ; waste not the time, we will not brook delay.

TIMUR.

Hassan, advise me, or my senses fail.

BARAC.

Suffer in silence.—Princess respect his age, his rank,—nor stain thy royal state with such unworthy actions ; on me inflict the chastisement thy cruelty intends, and be it speedy ; in vain our time of trial is prolonged, we shall hold firm, and keep the fatal secret.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Yes, age shall be respected, and on *thee* fall double strokes for this thy insolence ; slaves, on the instant obey our orders. (*Slaves raise their arms to strike.*)

FATIMA, (*weeping.*)

Ah me ! my husband !

ADELMA *rushes in, exclaiming—*

Stop, stop ! my princess, send these culprits instantly down to the dungeons under the seraglio ; the emperor is already on his way to visit these apartments :—this vase of gold must be at my disposal, to bribe the guards who drive all visitors from the young prince ; mine be the task to enter his retreat, and steal away his secret. Obey me, Fatima, as thou dost value thy husband's life ;—Zelima, submit to what I dictate, or lose thy mother. My princess, for thee I shall bring cheerful tidings presently.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Yes, to thy zeal we trust our cause. Adelma, thine be the gold ; let Zelima and Fatima perform thy bidding.

ADELMA.

Bear off the treasure, slaves ; and wait my orders in the dark passage leading to the guard-room. Zelima and Fatima attend my steps. (*Slaves bear off the gold.*)

(*Exit ADELMA, ZELIMA, and FATIMA.*)

BARAC, (*as they go out.*)

Wife,—daughter,—betray him not ; obey not this barbarian. Alas ! my sovereign, what will be thy fate !

TURANDOCTÉ.

Bear them away, ye slaves, to the deep dungeons ; there chain them fast.

TIMUR.

Princess, our life we ask not ; but spare our son, for mercy.

BARAC.

There is no mercy in that flinty heart for thee, or for thy son. Tremble, thou murderess, lest after all due punishment o'erwhelm. (*They are forced away.*)

TURANDOCTÉ.

What can Adelma do to bring assistance ? One conquest more, so high my fame will rise that none thenceforth will venture to oppose me. With a loud voice, in presence of the divan, we will proclaim the names of sire and son, and banish this proud stranger from the realm. Yet his afflic-

tion almost wakes compassion ; methinks his form stands, sad and pale, imploring.—Ah ! Turandocté, what base thoughts assail thee ? Ye gods of China, assist Adelma to save our freedom !

SCENE II.

Saloon in the Harem ;—Music ;—the Emperor enters, reading a Letter, attended by USBEC, NEVIAN, Guards, Slaves, &c. —TURANDOCTÉ enters from another apartment, followed by some Female Slaves, at the conclusion of ALTOUN'S first Speech.

ALTOUN, (*reading and muttering to himself.*)

“ The sultan of Carazam has terminated his usurpations ; Calaf, the son of Timur, king of the Nogaian Tartars, shall arrive at Pekin, and, after strange vicissitudes, shall close in that imperial city his long misfortunes.”—(*Aloud :*) Oh, who can penetrate the deep decrees of fate !

USBEC, (*aside to NEVIAN, while ALTOUN reads.*)

What the devil can the emperor be saying to his own majesty ?

NEVIAN.

A private messenger has been closeted with his mightiness a quarter of an hour, and is gagged and sent to prison.

ALTOUN.

Daughter, the crisis of thy fate approaches ; in vain the night is spent in restless vigils, the secret still remains impenetrable. We, without effort, have obtained the knowledge which thou hast vainly sought. In this small leaf (*holds up a folded paper,*) the names are both inscribed, with tokens evident descriptive of their persons : the messenger who brought this information is, by our positive command, shut up in close confinement, and can speak with no one until the trial's past. The stranger *is* a prince, his sire a king : canst thou resolve again in full assembly to furnish mirth for a base multitude ? (*Signs to all to retire to a distance,—with ceremonies they obey.*) Draw near and listen how we can yet repair thine honour.

TURANDOCTÉ.

How, mine honour !—With thanks, my sovereign sire, we do deny our honour needs assistance ; even in the divan, we have hopes to-morrow to save our *credit*, without royal aid.

ALTOUN.

Rather to lose it quite, and, covered with confusion, repent too late thy folly. Confess to us, thy sire and emperor, hast thou attained the names ?

TURANDOCTÉ.

In the divan, before the learned mandarins, we will confess whatever is required.

ALTOUN.

No, Turandocté, no, thou canst not learn them, if still unknown. Perverse as ever!—Yet would we spare thee, and on one condition will suffer thee to vanquish the young prince: swear but to this, that, after he has seen himself outdone, and turns despairing from the scene of trial, thou wilt extend thine hand, and pledge thy faith to take him for thy consort. Swear to act thus, and glory shall be thine: the shouting crowd will hail thy victory; the prince will, by his wisdom and his valour, support our throne and share our government.

TURANDOCTÉ.

We are resolved, and will await the trial.

ALTOUN.

Await it then, and meet thy destiny: the divan shall be, after thy defeat, the temple of thy nuptials; there shall the Bonze attend to seal thy marriage, in spite of tears and prayers, with the young stranger; the multitude will shout with exultation, and thy distress will move their ridicule.

(Exit, angry.)

TURANDOCTÉ.

Adelma, mine only friend, where is thy promised comfort? where shall we hide, if thy design should fail?

SCENE III.

An Apartment with two doors, lighted by a Lamp suspended from the top.—CALAF on a Sofa. Enter CUBLON with a torch.

CUBLON.

Does your highness sleep? Another hour and the dawn will break, to usher in, I trust, a happy day. Shall I keep longer watch?

CALAF.

Misfortune keeps me waking; yet, with thanks, I willingly dismiss thee to repose.

CUBLON.

One favour of thy greatness let me beg,—if any spectres come to ask thee questions, guard well thine answers.

CALAF.

What spectres?

CUBLON.

More I dare not explain: the emperor commands that none shall enter here, on pain of death, but we poor slaves;—interest and fear break squares with faith and honesty.

The princess is an empress, at least as mighty as a score of emperors. None but spectres can find admittance ;—*they* can hardly be excluded.

CALAF.

Is not my life secure in this apartment ?

CUBLON.

Quite safe : that peril was not in my meaning ; but *temptations*,—of them beware ! a restless *curiosity* may lead some female spectre to enquire thy name, to ascertain *who* is secured in this sequestered chamber.—Does your highness understand me now ?

CALAF.

I comprehend enough to make me cautious.

CUBLON.

Bravo ! betray not me who run such hazards to warn thee against treachery.—(*Aside:*) 'Twas not in human nature to refuse that purse of sequins, at least I found it far beyond my strength. (*Exit.*)

CALAF.

He has awaked suspicions.—Who can intend to visit my retreat ? I can defend myself against a host, with Turan-docté for my leading star.

(*Enter FATIMA, disguised as a sentinel, with a paper in her hand.*)

FATIMA.

My lord, my prince, art thou then sleeping?

CALAF.

Who calls? What seek ye?

FATIMA.

'Tis Fatima, the wife of Hassan; in this disguise I seek thy prison to relate my griefs, but fear and agitation almost o'ercome me.

CALAF.

Fatima! what wouldst thou tell?

FATIMA.

My miserable husband is confined in peril of his life, because it has been rumoured to the princess the secret of thy birth is known to him; with bribes and menaces they try to wrest some information from him, but in vain.

CALAF.

Ah, faithful servant! cruel Turandocté!

FATIMA.

Yet more, thy sire resides within my house, mourning his consort dead,—his absent son.

CALAF.

Alas! the gods avert it!

FATIMA.

He is, and knows that Hassan is confined ; that thou wert borne away by palace-guards ; he weeps, and scarce can be detained by prayers from rushing forth to claim his only son ;—from this rash step I have persuaded him, by promising to seek thee, and bring a written leaf, signed by thine hand, in evidence of thy security.

CALAF.

My sire in Pekin ! my mother dead ! Thou dost deceive me, Fatima.

FATIMA.

If it is falsehood, may the great Chien-wang devour me now, or give me to the dragon with five sharp claws.

CALAF

Unhappy father ! Oh, lamented mother !

FATIMA

Be swift, my son, ere new vexations reach us ; write to the good old sire, few words will satisfy him ; sign but thy name, and tell him of thy health.

(Offers pen and ink, with the paper.)

CALAF.

Give me the paper. — Hold, I had forgotten ; haste, Fatima, to bid him seek the emperor, declare in private conference his wish, and trust to Altoun's well-known clemency.

FATIMA.

Wilt thou not write then ?

CALAF.

No, Fatima, I will not; my secret will be known throughout the city, ere this now dawning day shall close in darkness. Much it grieves me that Hassan's wife should deal in treachery !

FATIMA.

Treachery !—(*Aside :*) I must not mar the other plot of Adelma.—(*Aloud :*) I'll bear thy message home, the risk of life has merited a better name than *Traitress* !—(*Aside :*) Adelma is right subtle, but this man has all his wits awake.
(*Exit.*)

CALAF.

The slave did well who put me on my guard ; what heavy tidings,—my mother dead—my sire arrived in Pekin. Who moves this way ? more spectres !

(*ZELIMA enters veiled, with a lute, sings.*)

SONG.

Air,—The Manly Heart.

Love borrows oft the veil of sadness,
While eyes of light the theft betray,
Will sometimes seek disguise in gladness
Or under clouds of anger play.

His brow serene, in anger shining,
 His sighs that shade the festive hour,
 Contrast with sympathy combining
 Reveal his presence and his power.

CALAF.

Fair vision ! speak, who art thou ?

ZELIMA.

A slave of Turandocté, whose commands all tremble to refuse, has found admittance to bring thee, prince, some comfort in thy solitude.

CALAF.

Would it were comfort in my misery ; return and do not trifle, the heart of your princess is unrelenting.

ZELIMA.

It cannot be denied ; yet be assured there lingers still a ray of hope behind :—in spite of her disdain for all thy sex, thy suit has waked a sentiment unknown before ; thou wilt not credit this, because the princess speaks loudly of aversion, and is believed. I who have waited on her from her childhood can read her thoughts, which all incline towards thee. May the earth open and swallow me alive, if thou art not beloved !

CALAF.

Well, now this happy message is delivered, hast thou ought else to tell me ?

ZELIMA.

I might tell thee, prince, the ruling passion of my royal mistress is high ambition; she dreads confessing in the public divan the names remain concealed. Spare, then, her fame, and trust her gratitude. May the abyss open and seize me, if I utter falsehood!

CALAF.

Damsel, forbear to call upon thyself such dire calamities, since I express no doubts; return to Turandocte, say that the hour of trial may be avoided by shewing that her heart can feel compassion, that fame and honour wait on generous actions, let her resolve to give her royal hand to her adoring lover: bring me such tidings, and I will hail thee messenger of gladness.

ZELIMA.

Not so, my lord; the weakness of our sex demands indulgence; the fair princess requires a favour of thee; 'tis to save her glory: reveal the names to *me*, and Turandoc   to-morrow in the divan will repeat them;—then, having cleared her fame, will quit her throne to offer thee her hand, without reluctance, in full assembly.

CALAF.

In this last speech, young damsel, thou hast omitted thine own concluding words.

ZELIMA.

What words, my lord?

CALAF.

May the earth open and swallow me alive, if this is false!

ZELIMA.

Hast thou then doubts that——

CALAF, (*interrupting.*)

My doubts are satisfied ;—go, tell the princess, my *love* for her makes me refuse the names, and I beseech her highness will impute my perseverance to my ardent passion.

ZELIMA.

I will persuade no longer, but leave thee to thy fate.
(*Exit*)

CALAF.

Go, idle apparitions ; my mind is weary and o'erspent with watching ; rest has a comfort which affords relief to shorten heavy hours.

(CALAF *lays on the sofa, and sleeps.*)

TRUFALDIN *enters with a root in his hand, speaks low to himself.*

Two purses of gold for *telling* two names, but I must *find them out* before I *can* tell them. If he would talk in his sleep now :—I'll try some magic on him. A great physician asked me one day to carry his chopsticks for him to his house ; when we came there he gave me as reward a root of wondrous virtues ; this root held near the head of a sleeping person will force him to reveal his secret thoughts,

and answer truly to any question ; the holy dervise Xeusi relates a hundred stories of miracles performed by this clavicordis ; now then—(*lays the root close to the prince's head, and stands at the back of the sofa, watching him.*) He does not speak, perhaps it is by signs the secret must be found :—why, there, the root has moved him.—(*Calaf is restless, and changes his position. Trufaldin observes, and with many grimaces spells as Calaf moves,*)—G R I M B O ; his name prince Grimbo ; my fortune's made if I can find out who his father was. Ah ! there's a female coming ; I'll be gone, or she will wind the secret out of me ; one purse is now my due. (*Runs off.*)

(*Enter ADELMA veiled, with a taper ; Calaf still sleeping.*)

ADELMA.

Can *all* my projects fail ? Oh, love, whose power has oft enabled me to conquer obstacles and find expedients, assist thy hapless votary ;—sleeps my beloved, 'tis sad to rob those eyelids of repose and bid them wake to sorrow, but the fleeting hour admits of no delay. Stranger, arise !

CALAF, (*starting up.*)

Who calls on me ? another spectre, with insidious voice, to tempt my harassed spirits !—is there not for me one hour of peace or rest ?

ADELMA.

Thou hast no cause to fear a hapless damsel, who comes not to enquire thy name or learn thy secrets, but to reveal her own. Sit then and listen.

CALAF.

Damsel, how camest thou here? endeavours to betray, I tell thee, will be fruitless.

ADELMA.

I betray thee! ungrateful. Say, has not Fatima been here this night, to tempt thee with a paper?

CALAF.

She has.

ADELMA.

Thou didst not satisfy her?

CALAF.

I was not such a fool.

ADELMA.

Did a young slave, attendant on the princess, come here to try, with a deceitful story, if thou wouldst tell thy name?

CALAF.

She did, but went away in ignorance, as thou may'st go.

ADELMA.

Alas! how little dost thou know my thoughts, or why these base suspicions; sit and hear me. (*Both sit down.*)

CALAF.

Proceed to let me know what brought thee here?

ADELMA.

Dost thou suppose we ever met before ?

CALAF.

Lady, in thy deportment and thy words appear the indications of a birth above that humble habit which denotes thy present servitude ;—if I mistake not, thou wert in the divan of yesterday, attendant on the princess ?

ADELMA.

The slave of Turandocté ! Five years are past since first I felt compassion for thy misfortunes ;—since in my sire's dominions I beheld thee employed in lowly offices, ill-suited to thy high-born courteous looks : the public trial awaked new sympathy ;—too well my heart assures me thou wert not born to serve. Prince, 'tis a royal damsel seeks thy confidence (*unveils*) ; say, does thy memory retain these features ?

CALAF.

Ah ! Adelma ! the princess who was reported dead ?

ADELMA.

The same, the daughter of Cheicobad, a princess born ;—now doomed to slavery, a miserable handmaid, oppressed, afflicted.

CALAF.

Whence then arose the rumour of thy death, and by what

adverse fortune does it happen, that I behold the daughter of a monarch in servitude ?

ADELMA.

In bonds and bitterness, how shall I speak the fatal ruin of our royal race ? I had a brother once, who, like thyself, struck with the charms of haughty Turandocté, rushed blindly to the trial in the divan, and, failing, lost his life ; his head is still upon the city gates ; ah, cruel sight for his unhappy sister ! (*Weeps.*)

CALAF.

Wretch that I am, who heard and would not credit what now I find too true.

ADELMA.

My sire Cheicobad, a valiant prince, assembled all his forces to revenge his son untimely slain : his courage prompted to an unequal contest ;—he attacked the realm of Altoun Kan ; fierce was the contest, but our adverse fortune again prevailed ; my sire, struck with a mortal wound, fell and expired ; his army fled ; the merciless vizier, determined to extirpate all our race, pronounced a dire command, and, by his order, the heads of my young brothers were cut off and carried to him. My mother, with my sister and myself, were thrown into the river where 'tis deepest. Scarce had these cruel orders been enforced, when Altoun came and saw our helpless forms float on our watery grave ; his heart was moved to pity ; he chid the vizier, and gave instant orders to save our lives. Alas ! too late his mercy ; —the queen and youngest princess had expired ; *me, most*

unfortunate, their cares revived to *serve*, the slave of haughty Turandocté, a present from her sire. Oh, stranger prince, commiserate my fate, servant to *her* the cause of all my sorrows.

CALAF.

Unhappy princess! I lament thy lot, though thine ill-fated brother was the cause, and thy sad father's rashness, of thy woes. Yet how can I, a captive wretch, assist thee? thy story, though distressing, is told in vain: leave me!

ADELMA.

To thee I have revealed myself, because my features, seen before, confirm my words. Might I but wake compassion,—more I dare not expect,—from one so blindly led, even to destruction, by the fatal charms of Turandocté, whom to blame in aught excites thine anger.

CALAF.

Tell me at once what may the object be of this thy visit here?

ADELMA.

Thy thoughts still wrong me if thou canst suppose I came to injure thee, like those base tools who went before.

CALAF.

Keep me not in suspense: what wouldst thou say?

ADELMA, (*aside.*)

The prophet grant he may believe the story ! (*Aloud :*)
My prince, the impious cruel Turandocté has given a
command to murder thee an hour before the meeting of the
divan. Ah, where is then the hope to soften that stern
heart ? is thine affection proof against deceit like this ?

CALAF, (*rising suddenly.*)

To murder me !!

ADELMA.

Young prince, to slay thee, ere the hour of trial, are
twenty swords uplifted.

CALAF.

Oh ! wretched Calaf, who shall tell thy sire, unhappy
Timur, that his son is slain ?

ADELMA, (*aside.*)

“ CALAF, the Son of TIMUR.” So far my plot suc-
ceeds : if I persuade him not to fly with me, I can destroy
his chance with Turandocté.

CALAF, (*aside to himself.*)

Now what remains to fill my cup of woe ? my evil star
prevails. Is there a heart so treacherous, enshrined in
that enchanting form ? impossible ! Princess, thou
wouldst deceive !—

ADELMA.

Thy most unjust suspicions offend not me, who am prepared for doubts, and can relate new proofs. Even now, the princess, in despair, confesses she cannot learn the names; she paces furious through the guarded harem, surrounded by her slaves, who watch her steps with terror; her face is pale with passion, her eyes are red with frequent tears; distorted are her features; no longer can that countenance bewitch the sight! Vain my endeavour to soften her asperity; to plead a faithful lover's cause. A hateful plot she weaves against thy life: if thou art doubtful still, I rather grieve on thy account, than mine.

CALAF.

Then in the midst of guards, placed for my safety, I am betrayed! Well said the slave, "Interest and fear break squares with faith and honesty." I will not shun the death she chooses for me: let my last breath be spent to gratify the pride of Turandocté.

ADELMA.

Stranger, Adelma opens thee a way to shun thy adverse fortune: I have secured the favour of the sentinel with sums of gold; and now have power to free thee from painful death—myself from slavery. In my own kingdom are great treasures, buried in safe and sure concealment; Alinguer, kan of Berlas, is our kinsman; I have an escort ready; fleet steeds are waiting to bear us hence, far from these hated walls. The scattered forces of my valiant sire, led on by thee, may form around the throne, and hail thee

sovereign. All shall be thine,—this hand, if such thy wish : dost thou disdain the tie, choose for thyself. Our Tartary can boast of princesses whose beauty may compare with Turandocté's. O stranger, let us fly !

CALAF.

Generous Adelma ! no, it cannot be. Choose not a wretch like me to share thy throne. Had I the power to free thee from this bondage, thou shouldst be safe conducted to Berlas ; but not in secret. Altoun might reasonably call me traitor, if, breaking all the laws of hospitality, I stole thee from his court.

ADELMA.

The treachery of the princess jus —

CALAF, (*interrupting.*)

I bow to her decree : there is a pleasure in dying for her sake, who is the object of adoration. Fly then alone, whilst I, for Turandocté, resign a life I value not without her.

ADELMA.

Has love so blinded thee ?

CALAF.

How can I wish to live, except to win her, without whom death were welcome ?

ADELMA.

Ingrate! remain, and die. For a short space I will retain my chains to witness just revenge: thy doom is certain. (*Aside:*) Calaf, the son of Timur, thy punishment is near!—(*aloud*) Unknown, adieu! (*Exit.*)

CALAF.

Was ever night so harassing,—so long as this has been? Beset with spies,—hated by her for whom I yield my life: had she but *once* smiled on me to cheer my sufferings. The hardest toil beneath the eye of love carries a comfort with it, as an unsightly reptile, it is said, carries a precious jewel in its eye*. Ha! the sun rises, and my lingering torments this day will terminate.

Enter CUBLON, and Guards.

CUBLON.

Is your highness ready to attend the divan?

CALAF, (*agitated.*)

Is it thine office? perform her orders: take my life; I care not.

CUBLON.

My orders are to bring thee instantly, before the divan; because our mighty emperor has just set forth, to fill his throne in that most learned assembly.

* "The toad, ugly and venomous, bears yet a precious jewel in its eye."

Shakspeare.

CALAF, (*wildly.*)

Haste to the divan:—never shall I reach it: (*throws down his sword.*) See how devotedly I march to death: let the fair tyrant hear with what submission—

CUBLON.

Why what the devil does he mutter? those mischief-making females have robbed him of his sleep, and bereft him of his senses. Halloo, present arms there!

(*Exeunt omnes, with a flourish of drums and trumpets.*)

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

Scene—The Hall of the Divan: the Emperor on his Throne; the Mandarins seated, and all the Courtiers, Officers, &c. ranged as in the former Scene. The distant end of the Hall is concealed by a large dark Curtain.

(CALAF is conducted in; he seems agitated, and looks round him; then bows to ALTOUN.)

CALAF, *(aside.)*

How 's this? no murderers meet me. Has Adelma deceived me, or Turandocté changed her cruel purpose?

ALTOUN.

My son, why this confusion? we hoped to see a cheerful countenance this day, on which thy long misfortunes end. Our thoughts anticipate a time of peace. Three messengers have sought us from the princess, with supplications to avert the trial, and leave her still the freedom of her choice. Show courage!

USBEC.

Be it known unto your highness that I was hurried up twice in the night to attend the commands of the princess.

I rejoice already to think of the feasts and festivals we shall celebrate.

NEVIAN.

At day-break I waited on her royal highness, who, much disturbed, bid me in haste convey her last entreaties to her mighty sire, our sovereign, Altoun Kan.

ALTOUN.

Our last commands were absolute, to suffer no more delay: spite of resistance, the slaves had orders to bring her to the divan. Great cause, indeed, have we for anger! O! here at last she comes, downcast and sad. Rejoice my son.

(Solemn music is heard.)

CALAF.

Excuse me, sire, suspense is torturing: it also grieves me the beauteous princess should feel uneasiness on my account; for rather—ah,—what dare I utter? Could I live without her? no: let me die. O might but time and my assiduous service subdue her coldness, I would be faithful ever, nor ever give her cause to wish my death.

(Music announcing the approach of TURANDOTÉ.)

ALTOUN.

Make ready, ministers! display the altar! we will enforce obedience from an ungrateful daughter. Let the crowd have ingress, and make rejoicings to celebrate the royal nuptials.

(The Curtain is drawn, and discovers an Altar, with a Chinese idol ; a Bonze stands on each side, with a Book.

USBEC.

Her highness comes, and, as I think, in tears.

NEVIAN.

It is melancholy music, and the procession resembles a funeral.

(To solemn music enter Pages, Eunuchs, Female Slaves, TURANDOCTÉ, ADELMA, ZELIMA, Female Slaves, Guard of White and Black Eunuchs : all prostrate themselves before the Throne, then range themselves into their places. TURANDOCTÉ, as she ascends her Throne, starts on perceiving the Altar.

TURANDOCTÉ.

These signs of grief, oh stranger, which appear among our servants, bring gladness to thine heart ; that altar, decked with garlands, is in thy eyes a pledge of triumph : my just revenge is unattainable, and destiny, perforce, must have its way.

CALAF.

Couldst thou, bright princess, but peruse my thoughts ; how my aspiring hopes are checked and broken by thy displeasure, would appear more evident than that presump-

tuous joy I dare not welcome : disdain not, then, to crown the happiness of thine adorer with the soft bond of love-reciprocal. I pray for pardon, if my flame offends; but cannot cease from loving.

ALTOUN.

My courteous son, the princess merits not such gentle fair entreaty. 'Tis time to force submission to our orders. Sound drums and trumpets ! let the knot be tied.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*to CALAF.*)

Stay till the time arrives of our defeat: this is the hour of triumph. We have allowed appearances to cheat thee with false security ; now thus we cast thee down : (*rises.*) Let every ear attend to note my words: CALAF, THOU SON OF TIMUR, quit this city, and seek another bride ! far hence begone, and tremble at the name of Turandocté.

CALAF *stands as if thunderstruck.*

ALTOUN.

Alas, ye gods ! why suffer scenes like this ?

NEVIAN, (*aside.*)

Oh Berguinzino, what a turn is here !

USBEC, (*aside.*)

Beard of Chien-fo, we lose the bridal-feast !

CALAF, (*awaking as from a trance.*)

Lost, all is lost! My rashness has undone me, and dashed the cup of fortune's choicest sweets beyond my reach for ever, just as I hoped to grasp the fleeting treasure. Now none can comfort me. Why, cruel emperor, didst thou change the law which doomed my death?

ALTOUN.

Calaf, the deep affliction which we suffer at this unlooked-for stroke o'erwhelms our age with sorrow.

TURANDOCTÉ, (*to ZELIMA.*)

Zelima, they move our pity, alas!

ZELIMA.

Great princess, show compassion: behold the people, how anxiously they watch!

ADELMA.

This is the hour of life or death to me.

CALAF.

Disdainful fair, thy triumph is complete: Calaf, the victim of thy cruelty, the sport of fortune, and the slave of fate, who, driven to frenzy, thus, before thine eyes—

(*Draws a dagger, and aims it at his heart.* TURANDOCTÉ rushes to seize his arm.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Hold, prince Calaf !

ALTOUN.

Amazement !

CALAF.

Thou Turandocté ! thou prevent my death ! Is it then possible that soft compassion has reach'd thy heart ? Ah no ! 'tis rather thy cruel wish to bid me live, far distant, through years of anguish. Let me, oh let me quit this world of woe ; and, if my constancy may claim some favour, have pity on my sire, the sorrowing Timur, who, now in Pekin, draws his weary steps towards the tomb.

(CALAF raises his dagger ; TURANDOCTÉ stops his arm.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Live, Calaf, live ! thy constancy has conquered our resistance. Run, Zelima, release the prisoners ; comfort the good old man ; console thy mother.

ZELIMA.

Most readily.

(Exit ZELIMA.

ADELMA.

My doom is fixed : there is no hope remaining.

TURANDOCTÉ.

Calaf, the names on which thy fate depended were both betrayed by thine own indiscretion to Adelma, my slave, who brought them to us. We are not capable of such injustice as all the world supposes. Thy gentle manners, and thy noble mien, have won a place for thee within our heart. Live then, and boast the princess Turandocté will take thee for her consort.

CALAF, (*flings down the dagger.*)

Live, and for thee ? oh, transport !

ALTOUN.

Daughter, my dearest daughter, we forgive all past offences,—all thy former pride : this day, this happy day, restores our peace.

USBEC.

Make way to the altar !

NEVIAN.

Make room for the beautiful princess and the learned prince !

ADELMA, (*rushing forward.*)

Yes, live, base wretch, rejoicing with my rival ; and thou, detested princess, know my projects were not employed to favour thy intentions, but to attain my own :

five years this prince, although his rank I knew not, has been the object of my fondest wishes : this night I vainly urged him to elope, but failed ; and with a well-concerted story surprised him to betray the fatal names : to thee I bore them, to ensure his banishment for ever from this realm, intending also to fly with him, and make my ready services a passport to his heart ; his *blind* devotion to thy charms defeated all my own plans of happiness. *One* path is left to lead me from my woes ; I am of royal birth, and long have borne the heavy chain of slavery ;—through thee have lost my parents, brothers,—all the objects of affection : take, then, the rest, and let me find release from misery. This steel (*takes up the dagger,*) shall reach my heart, and let the world see if I fear to meet or strike the blow. (*Raises her arm, which CALAF stops.*)

CALAF.

Adelma, hold !

ADELMA.

Leave me, ungrateful tyrant, I will have death !

CALAF.

Harm not thyself : I am indebted to thee, for all my happiness ; thy treachery was the cause of my success : my desperation wrought upon the mind of matchless Turandocté, and awaked soft pity there. Blame not my love for that bright excellence, since, if my soul could fix on aught but her, I had not proved ungrateful to Adelma.

ADELMA.

I own myself unworthy of compassion from thee, whom I have wronged.

TURANDOCTÉ.

What fury urged thee, Adelma ?

ADELMA.

Of my misfortunes thou alone art cause, and well thou knowst my story : grant me, at least, the means to fly from Pekin. I cannot live to see these odious nuptials. Beware ! provoke not the fiend of jealousy : there is no safety for thee, where Adelma resides.

ALTOUN.

Alas, we pity thee, unhappy princess !

CALAF.

Cease, Adelma, to weep thine adverse fortune : I will endeavour to assuage thy grief, and use my influence in thy behalf. Oh, royal Altoun, and thou, gracious princess, if 'tis permitted me to ask a boon, let Adelma be free.

TURANDOCTÉ.

To thy entreaties we add our own. Oh, royal sire, restore Adelma's freedom.

ALTOUN.

On this auspicious day, my royal favour to none can be

denied. Adelma shall be free; and, sent from hence to rule the kingdom of her sire, may choose a consort to share her throne.

ADELMA.

Oppressed with wonder, gratitude, remorse,—how can my tongue give utterance to my feelings? time may perhaps recall my scattered senses: at present I can only weep and tremble.

CALAF.

Alas, my sire, the venerable Timur, where can I seek thee? whither turn to cheer and comfort thee?

TURANDOCTÉ.

Thy sire is safe, and now rejoices at thy success. Oblige us not, in public, to reveal the follies we repent of. Timur is in the seraglio.

ALTOUN.

Hail to Prince Calaf! here thy troubles end. Timur shall reign again. The Sultan of Carazam, whose iron yoke bore heavy on thy vassals, at length is slain. A faithful minister now guards the sceptre, and sends in secret to the neighbouring states for tidings of his sovereign and his prince. (*Gives a Letter to CALAF.*) Peruse this writing, which confirms my words.

CALAF, (*reading.*)

Can this be real? All-bounteous gods preserve my

senses on this day of bliss. O change incredible to mortal thoughts ! pardon my past complainings, and teach me how to bear such happiness !

TURANDOCTÉ.

No grief remains to cloud my nuptial hour :—a royal prince has risked his life for me ; a faithful subject has preserved the secret entrusted to him through extremest peril ; a minister, who might have worn a crown, has saved it for his king ; an aged monarch would die to save his son ; a damsel, whom we treated like a friend, has plotted to deceive us. Pardon, great sire, our former waywardness : we that have hated men will now acknowledge the prejudice unjust, and henceforth live in peace and charity with all mankind.

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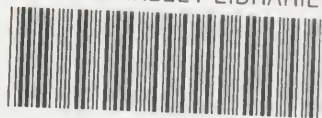
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